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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE. NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/PASCUAL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/12/2017

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: QADURA FARES SAYS MARWAN BARGHOUTI SUPPORTS PM  
FAYYAD

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. Summary. Qadura Fares, a close ally of jailed Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti, told PolChief December 10 that PM Salam Fayyad should concentrate on governing and ignore those voices from Fatah who want to see a change in government. He said Barghouti supports PM Fayyad and his government, but will make no public declarations of this support for now. Fares welcomed the Israeli-Palestinian joint understanding at Annapolis and the one year time frame for a permanent status agreement, but expressed concern that Palestinians have yet to see changes on the ground. End Summary.

Fayyad Should Ignore Fatah Critics  
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¶2. (C) In a December 10 meeting, Qadura Fares told PolChief that jailed Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti supports PM Fayyad and his government, unlike many Fatah leaders who are working to undermine him. Asked whether Barghouti will offer public support, Fares pointed to Barghouti's public statement of support immediately after Fayyad was appointed and said Barghouti will not issue another statement for now. He said Barghouti supports PM Fayyad, but does not feel they have a dialogue. Fares noted that upon taking office, Fayyad promised to visit Barghouti in prison, but has not done so yet. (Note: Fayyad visited Barghouti repeatedly before becoming Prime Minister, but not since. End Note.) Fares said some Fatah leaders see Barghouti's supporters as Fayyad's allies and resent this relationship. He added that he believes "the success of Fayyad's government will also be Fatah's success," and if Fayyad's government fails, Fatah will be punished at the polls.

¶3. (C) Asked how Fayyad can counter his Fatah detractors, Fares advised that the PM ignore them and concentrate on governing; that will demonstrate to Palestinians that he is a strong leader. Fares said Fayyad's answer to Fatah should be "if there is achievement, there is legitimacy." He added that Fatah is stirring up trouble with PA-employed teachers and health workers, but Fayyad should deal seriously with employees' complaints and public sector strikes. He said there are some legitimate complaints, and if Fayyad addresses them seriously, he will successfully counter Fatah's efforts.

After Annapolis: Need Changes on the Ground  
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¶4. (C) Fares was positive about Annapolis, including the joint understanding reached by the Israelis and Palestinians and the announcement of a one year time frame for a permanent status agreement. However, Fares expressed concern that since Annapolis Palestinians have not seen changes on the ground: obstacles to access and movement remain, no

significant prisoners were freed, and there has been no freeze on settlement activity. Fares warned that improvements in the daily lives of Palestinians are necessary to strengthen moderate voices who advocate for negotiations.

WALLES